The IDLER

Public Occurrences, Comment, Excursions & Rational Entertainment

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Sinking Reasonably Into The Mud

EVEN SOME ADMINISTRATION officials, in those rare moments when they are in the company of reason, admit that there is a point beyond which the Vietnamese war can not be expanded without creating risks that far outweigh any possible advantage. Many outside the government feel the point has long since been passed. The Administration, however, has never defined, except by intimation, where it believes that point to be.

Unfortunately, this Administration's intimations are not to be trusted. Two years ago, Lyndon Johnson strongly intimated that he opposed the heavy involvement of American troops and that he opposed the dropping of bombs on North Vietnamese targets. It was this attitude that set him dramatically apart from his campaign opponent, Mr. Goldwater, in foreign policy matters. It was this attitude that helped to bring Mr. Johnson the massive victory that today he says permits him to carry out his present policy. "It was only 20 months ago that the people of America held a great election," the President said in Omaha this summer. "The people of 44 states of this Union, including the great state of Nebraska, gave me a direction and voted me a majority for the Presidency of this country. I believe that their vote was a trust, that as long as I held this high and most responsible office and gift of the America people, that I would do my best as President of the country, as Commander in Chief of the Army."

The people's vote was no such thing. It was a vote of desperation, a choice between certain failure and possible adequacy. And it was predicated in part upon a foreign policy outlined by Mr. Johnson that he has now junked in favor of one remarkably similar to that repulsed in the "great election."

How is it that, less than two years later, the President can twist the facts with impunity? How is it that so many who rejected Mr. Goldwater now embrace a modified version of his policy carried out by Mr. Johnson?

The reason lies, in large measure, in the manner in which the war has been expanded. The President has escalated this conflict in such a way as to lead a large portion of the public voluntarily into the quagmire with him and to keep to a minimum the protests of those who have opposed widening the war. It has been a masterful job.

Each new step grows with apparent logic out of the previous one: it makes no sense to have a few advisers in Vietnam unless you put in enough troops and equipment to do the job right; it makes no sense to limit the war to South Vietnam if the aggression is coming from the north; it makes no sense to bomb the North Vietnamese supply routes unless you also bomb the fuel depots; it makes no sense to . . .

One can continue the series to disaster if one wishes. And Mr. Johnson will be right there at your side, saying, "You took the last step. Let us carefully and soberly take one more.

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The Idler

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Look how reasonably you sink into the mud."

But despite the major shift in U.S. policy; despite the massive buildup of American military force; despite the 24 billion dollars a year (about 20 per cent of the national budget); despite the brutal expansion of the war; despite all this, the fundamental truth about Vietnam has remained static over the past two years: Neither we nor the Vietcong can win this war so long as the other side is supported by great unused resources. We have these resources, ranging all the way to the ability to completely obliterate North Vietnam and her allies. The Vietcong and the North Vietnamese have these resources, ranging all the way to the active participation of China and the Soviet Union.

We are in the stalemate we have been in all along. All our efforts have only upped the price of that stalemate. We have arrogantly assumed that our military might could solve the complex problems of Indochina and we have been sadly wrong.

Even if the North Vietnamese decide to come to the conference table tomorrow it will be a conference table that has been too long unnecessarily vacant. Even if a settlement is reached next month, America will have to carry the burden of shame for having relied on brute force without ever giving reason a fighting chance.

Ours has been a single-headed policy. We have been unwilling to match our military effort with a commensurate search for the politcal solution that must ultimately come or with a commitment of nonmilitary aid to South Vietnam that measures up to the problem. We have been spendthrift with our sorties of war and miserly with our missions of peace.

And we have become increasingly hypnotized by the grandeur of war. The magnificence of military power in full exercise is stunning. The memory of less violent, more painstaking ways to our goals vanishes from our consciousness as we revel in the ecstasy of the vengeance of the righteous.

The Good Old Days

"Transforming Vietnam into a Western redoubt is ridiculous."
—John F. Kennedy

"Industry in the north is so small that it plays a very little role in the economy of the North, and . . . it could be completely eliminated and not reduce in any substantial way the contribution of the North to South Vietnam."
—Robert S. McNamara
February, 1965

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In 1848, when this country found itself involved in a dubious war against Mexico, Rep. Abraham Lincoln is quoted in the *Congressional Globe* as having said of President Polk:

"He had trusted to avoid the scrutiny of his own conduct by directing the attention of the nation, by fixing the public eye upon military glory—that rainbow that rises in showers of blood—that serpent's eye that charms but to destroy; and thus calculating, had plunged into this war, until disappointed as to the ease by which Mexico could be subdued, he found himself at last he knew not where."

Today President Johnson has fixed the public eye on a rainbow in Southeast Asia that rises in a shower of blood. He can, by continuing to do so, keep a good portion of the American public with him, but there are no solutions in the sky.

The solutions must be found, with or without the blood. Perhaps they will be forced upon us, by other countries demanding a return to reason. Perhaps they will even well up out of South Vietnam itself.

A report from Saigon a few weeks back by Richard Critchfield, of the Washington *Evening Star*, quoted Dr. Van Sung, leading newspaper editor in Saigon, as having said:

"You cannot kill all the Vietcong. This is not Korea. The Vietnamese Army has no moral prestige. To weaken North Vietnam to the point of negotiating on the basis of Korea and our hush-hush policy of refusing to talk with the Vietcong is no longer realistic."

If this feeling grows in South Vietnam will we adjust to it? Or will our moral crusade and our commitment to the military elite in Saigon hold us to our current intransient policy?

Critchfield reported:

"While the young officers want to fight the Vietcong to extinction, the civilian politicians hope to draw a distinction between those southern members of the National Liberation Front who will accept the idea of an independent South Vietnam from those

Romney on Vietnam

In case our readers wonder where Gov. George Romney stands on Vietnam, the following won't help much. It is a portion of the governor's statement on the subject, delivered in his usual precise manner at the Governor's Conference earlier this year:

"We're in Vietnam legitimately for only one reason — because the South Vietnamese want us there to support them against aggression from the north. But there is ample reason to wonder whether the people of South Vietnam want us there . . .

"We have just escalated further. If this conflict really involves the question of our stopping communism . . . if it involves an international Communist conspiracy, then we have to weigh how much we can escalate without their escalating — if that's the real issue.

"We ought to take a searching look at what it takes to win militarily, and if it is a struggle with a Communist conspiracy, then we don't control how far it goes.

"We've got to go one way or the other. We haven't made up our mind yet. If this is the conflict we seem to imply it is, then we've got to risk the ultimate.

"I don't believe any person in the United States is able to bring to bear all that needs to be to deal with it, except the President and two or three of his advisers. Unfortunately, they don't seem to be sharing as much as they ought to be.

"I have refrained from taking a clear-cut position because the President has not, either. I don't know why a governor should, if he won't. I do not want to give him a blank check."

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hardcore Communists obedient to Hanoi.

"Such men bank heavily on forming a genuinely reformist government in Saigon that will push through land distribution and urban renewal."

Will we help these men or will we only seek continued retribution against the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese? The evidence is not encouraging.

The Administration asks of its critics: what are your alternatives?

And it is correct: there are no alternatives if each time you come to a fork, with one road leading towards peace and the other towards greater war, you take the one spewed with blood; if you frustrate the efforts of the United Nations and your allies to ease the conflict; if you refuse to pause for more than a moment in the blitz; if you decline to press for reforms in the South that will encourage the support of the people; if you are unwilling to pay the price of meeting the vast nonmilitary needs of the Vietnamese; if you speak of peace but refuse to talk to those who can bring it, if you consider a military clique the voice of a nation. No, there *are* no alternatives here, if you reject all choices other than an expansion of the failures of the past. None at all.

The Idler's Journal

YOUR EDITOR'S TRIP to Maine turned out much as projected in the last issue. The cruise up the Harraseeket River netted a view of four great blue herons (GBH's the ornithologically hip call them, I'm told) and two red-winged blackbirds. The hermit's boats under the great pine have been reduced to a few splintered grey boards. The fields were lush and the woods splattered spots of sunlight on the underbrush. There were several excellent sailing days. On one afternoon in particular our 16' sloop fairly scudded along out among the Casco Bay islands.

The weather was warm, warm enough for one accustomed to the summer-long Turkish bath of Washington to dive regularly into the chilled waters of the bay. In the evening the heat retreated after the sun had set behind the castle tower at South Freeport — that landmark so incongruous on the Maine coast, all that remains of an elaborate pre-World War I hotel that burned to the ground many years ago.

I write often, perhaps too often, of Maine, because it is a place that stirs in me deeply romantic and nostalgic emotions. The reader undoubtedly has such a place, but I can not write of it since I have not spent sufficient hours there to build the mound of memories and contentment necessary to fix it in my consciousness as *the place*.

Once such a reserve has accumulated, nothing can deplete it. Not even facts. One of the first letters I opened upon my return to Washington contained an editorial from the *Portland Evening Express* sent to me by Mary Warren. It outlined the pollution problem in Casco Bay and noted that a state commission had described it as primarily an outlet for municipal sewage and industrial waste (from Portland, South Portland and Westbrook). It was a discouraging piece but I did not love Casco Bay the less for it. I suppose that if each tide were to wash up on the beach dirty suds of detergent foam, I would still defend the bay's virtues against detractors such as unnostalgic and unromantic state commissions. Loyalty and love are our great defenses against too much objectivity.

Still I was — after reading the piece — angry. Not at the bay, but at those who were driving a wedge between my image of it and the reality.

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HUGH HAYNIE ...

"Sorry About That"

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There are, unfortunately, too many places throughout the country where one can have similar cause for anger. They are threatening to dam the Grand Canyon, slash the giant redwoods, spoil the face of the Capitol building. The casualties that have already occurred in recent years as a result of our contempt for the preservation of what can not be remade are legion. And the victorious battles are won only after an effort whose intensity testifies to the overwhelming size of the constituency of destroyers.

To be sure, conservation has a growing constituency. It is now strong enough to force the government to give frequent lip service and far less frequent actual support to its cause. But, as the Grand Canyon and redwoods affairs have shown, conservation still lacks adequate political clout. This Administration talks beauty, praises conservation — Stewart Udall, who now treats the Grand Canyon in a cavalier manner, wrote a book about it — but when the big fights develop, the power and lumber interests come first. Observing Messrs. Johnson and Udall at work brings to mind what Adlai Stevenson had to say about Richard Nixon:

"He's the sort of politician who will cut down a redwood, then stand on the stump and make a speech in favor of conservation."

THE IDLER.

The McDowell Papers

By Charles McDowell, Jr.

WASHINGTON

THE SEASON FOR SIGHTING unidentified flying objects is in full swing. The following all-purpose UFO story may be used in whole or in part whenever coverage of these mysterious sightings is required:

Scores of citizens reported seeing unidentified flying objects over the city last night.

A dozen persons in one neighborhood said three discs hovered over a patch of woods for about 10 minutes between 7:30 and 9 p.m. The discs were shaped like cigars or doughnuts, they said, and changed colors from silver to orange to red to "bluish-green."

The UFO's reportedly hovered at an altitude between 150 and 20,000 feet before ascending "straight up" at "fantastic speed."

A. R. Murkley, 78, a retired postman with many years of experience on a route near the airport, estimated the speed of the objects at 46,000 miles an hour.

Two patrolmen who went to the woods in response to a flood of calls to police headquarters said they saw five hovering objects giving off "an orange glow." They attributed the citizens' reports of only three objects to "mass hallucination."

When they approached the objects, the policemen said, the objects made a "whooshing" sound, made a U-turn at "fantastic speed" and departed in a southwesterly direction. The policemen pursued the objects but lost them near Main and Pine streets.

Finley P. Frawley, president of a local UFO-spotting club, said he spotted four UFO's over his house at 7:34 p.m. and assumed that they were trying to land in his back yard. He went inside to get a camera and start a pot of tea, but the objects were gone when he returned.

Frawley described the four objects as "Type 11-B, of conventional tapered disc configuration, glowing in the orange-blue spectrum, each about 700 feet in circumference and 4 feet thick at the center, thought to carry a crew of four and perhaps nine passengers."

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He showed a reporter a grainy photograph of a blur, saying it was made in Australia in 1954 and was one of four remaining copies not confiscated and presumably burned by the U.S. Air Force.

Meanwhile, on Pine Street, a housewife who asked not to be identified said a "large orange object with blue flames coming out of the bottom" had hovered outside her kitchen window for several minutes after dinner.

The object emitted "some kind of charge," she said, that turned off her automatic dish-washer in the middle of its rinse cycle.

Her husband, an occulist with 20-20 vision (corrected), confirmed her description of the object. He saw it, he said, while he was in the street in front of the house, starting for the corner store to buy an evening paper. He also felt the strange "charge" and said it turned off his motorcycle.

In Washington, a spokesman for the Air Force said he hadn't seen anything.

He documented this finding by releasing a statistical summary showing that 98 percent of all reported UFO sightings between 1951 and 1959 had been explained as identifiable objects, natural phenomena, mass hallucinations or pranks.

He offered the theory that the housewife had seen a weather balloon hovering outside her window and that her automatic dishwasher had been turned off by swamp gas. As for the motorcycle, the Air Force spokesman said it sounded like "pure fantasy."

A team of Air Force technicians reportedly was on the way from Washington, however, to check the dishwasher for short circuits and to interview a telephone lineman who said a UFO stopped at the top of the pole where he was working and asked directions to the nearest swamp where it could gas up.

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The Naga War

By Stanton Candlin

AT THE BEGINNING OF March 1944, a fateful course of events began at the Eastern Gates of India. The crossing of the Manipur River at that time by the Japanese Army heralded a major encounter of great ferocity between the British forces under General Slim and the enemy under General Mutaguchi. The offensive was first aimed at Imphal, the main British base for the reconquest of Burma, and Gen. Mutaguchi, in his Order of the Day, told his 100,000 Imperial troops:

This operation will engage the attention of the whole world and is eagerly awaited by a hundred of our countrymen. Its success will have a profound effect on the course of the war and may even lead to its conclusion. We must therefore expend every ounce of energy and talent to achieve our purpose.

While his troops obeyed his order to the letter and did, indeed, expend every ounce of their energy and talent, it was to no avail. The whole epic fought to a finish in the Naga Hills proved to be a major reverse for the Japanese who left 50,000 dead. Towards this defeat, the local inhabitants, the Nagas, provided a very real measure of support. General Slim and others paid tribute to their bravery, reliability, steadfast behavior and

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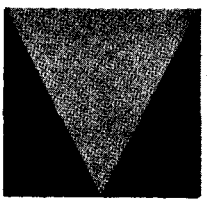

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indispensable services. A few, not nearly enough, won British decorations and nowhere during the whole course of the war were these more creditably earned.

It has been a sad reflection on the gratitude of India after its independence that Indian aggression against these tribesmen should have taken such a violent and repellent form. Unfortunately, little has been revealed of the fierce guerilla and counter-guerrilla war which was waged unremittingly in the fastnesses of the Naga Hills between the Indian Army intent on subjugation, and the "Naga Home Guard" defending their ancestral liberties against the post-war state installed in Delhi. Like others before them, including the British, independent India found it quite impossible to intimidate the Nagas or to break their fighting morale.

The immense importance of the Naga's struggle becomes clearer when it is realized that they, and others like them. hold within their hands the keys of India. Should that country ever again be threatened by an invasion from the East (and this is certainly a contingency which cannot be disregarded) the solution of the Naga problem would become of the greatest importance to those concerned with the defense of the Indian sub-continent and the greater Indian Ocean area.

The Nagas are a group of hill tribesmen of Mongolian race settled mainly in an area within Assam known variously as Nagaland, the Naga Hills or the Naga Hill Tracts. This includes an area known as Free Nagaland extending in a long panhandle which terminates in a frontier area contiguous with Red China, although that frontier is short compared with the much longer Eastern and Southern frontier which marches with Burma. Free Nagaland was so

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called because no sort of jurisdiction was ever claimed over it by the British Indian Empire, contrary to present Indian government policy.

The territory is rugged and consists, for the most part, of innumerable sharp ridges like the Yomas of Burma and Arakan so familiar to those who lived and fought in that theatre in World War II. Covered by jungle or scrub, the area seems to have been designed by nature for irregular warfare, for ambushes, concealment, mobility and surprise. It has bred a hardy warlike race of indomitable mountaineers who possess something like the proud independent spirit of the Scottish clans in whose vocabulary the word "surrender" does not exist. This race consists of a group of tribes bearing such names as Sema, Ao, Angami, Lothak, Konyak and Rengma. While it is difficult to estimate the population, and no really accurate census exists, there appear to be about five hundred thousand of them in Nagaland. Some authorities go so far as to say that there are nearly a million altogether, including many diffused into the neighboring tribal areas extending up to the Tibetan border and down into Burma itself. In all probability about one hundred and eighty thousand Nagas live within Burmese territory.

Their land, to which they are attached with the most passionate loyalty (they claim to be sprung from the earth itself), is extremely infertile and largely unproductive. As a result they have been obliged to live on a mere subsistence economy which they have, in the course of their long and turbulent history, been able to augment by raiding the territories of more affluent tribes, or even settlements in the neighboring plains. As aggressive and dangerous headhunters of ferocious and uncertain habits, they led the government of India (which had a most decided predisposition towards the enforcement of law and order) into a number of suppressive and punitive expeditions into Nagaland, particularly in the last century. The outcome of this was the annexation of the Naga Hill Tracts within the dominions of the Indian Empire in a loosely defined manner resting on a number of workable compromises and understandings, and leaving the large tract of Free Nagaland quite alone. Ruled by an almost imperceptible light rein of government and feeling essentially free because they still possessed their sanctuary of Free Nagaland, the Nagas felt that they had not sacrificed themselves nor demeaned themselves by surrendering their sovereignty to a foreign power.

The political officers charged with the problem came to the conclusion that it was quite unprofitable and unrealistic to oppose too strongly or to damage a tribal organization which believed forcefully in its right to elect its own leaders and clearly was prepared to fight strenuously to defend that right. It was obvious that the Nagas were prepared to oppose anybody who threatened their territory and right to individuality within their own system.

Attitudes of this kind were highly valued by the astute political services concerned with the defense of a large country against outside aggression with the rather small forces Indian revenues could support. As was seen during the war, the policy of frontier insulation was of great worth even when a great power appeared on the scene. As one of the leaders of the Nagas remarked to me in London in

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1962 when their predicament was being discussed there, "Why, we are *completely* neutral, we will fight *anybody* who tries to cross our borders, and tries to take our way of life from us."

The course of political development of the Naga nation has been full of surprises. Realizing that the traditional forms of their tribal organizations were becoming outworn in 1915, the Nagas founded a body called the Naga Club, surely one of the most exclusive in the world, modelled somewhat on their own conception of British ways in which clubs have often played an important role. It was not intended primarily to be a political institution, but to be a social setting or forum serving as a background for a more political framework.

The Simon Commission working in India on constitutional problems and reforms in 1929 considered that the Club did have a political significance in that it was keeping a watchful eye on any possible curtailment of the Nagas' hard-won privileges acquired during battles with the British. Edward Cadogan, who served on the Commission, made a significant and, indeed, prophetic statement when he said, "The tribesmen are more sophisticated in a particular way than, perhaps, the Commission may imagine. They had shrewd intuition that something may be done to take away from them some of their immemorial rights and customs."

In the postwar period after 1945, the Nagas, apprehensive about their political future at the hands of the new Indian authorities, founded the Naga National Council, a sort of parliament in which the interests of many tribes were represented. Then in 1956, they resolved on the formation of an independent government of their own, the Naga Federal Government, and designed a flag which was hoisted on March 22, 1956. This was a step which might be called the Naga Declaration of Independence and which has brought much misery and suffering upon them at the hands of the Indians who were provoked by this action into the most strenuous efforts to suppress them since their national movement started in 1947.

In that year, the N.N.C. sent a memorandum to the British Indian Government asking that an interim government be set up for a period of ten years after which the Nagas would be free to choose their own form of government. Unfortunately, it was not possible for the Nagas to agree upon any mutually acceptable form with the British authorities which the Nagas felt would guarantee their rights under the future Indian government. Nor could they accept any subsequent terms coming later from the new government. In fact, their attitude was such that the Indian government eventually felt obliged to withdraw their best offer. It then made the assertion that the desire for independence only emanated from a

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The Garden of Eden Apple

("I do not contend that a man has a right to another man's apple before he pays for it. I do contend that a man has a right in places of public accommodation to buy an apple without regard to whether his color is black or white. As I understand the Garden of Eden, the apple that was forbidden was not forbidden on grounds of color."—Ronnie Duggar, THE TEXAS OBSERVER, *January 10, 1964.)*

The Garden of Eden apple
Hung from a tree that bore
The Knowledge of Good and Evil
In it, its fruit. A chapel
Dissident sent to war
Against mankind, the Devil.

This Scotsnake convinced Eve
To taste the fruit forbidden,
Not forbidden on grounds of color
(Russet, with yellow weave),
But forbidden because forbidden.
She ate, and thence our dolor.

Her cheek turned red with power,
And, drunk, she took to Adam,
After thinking of keeping it from him,
The apple. With a sour
Grace, and a face macadam,
He bit, and seeping from him

Juices today continue
Within white meditations:
Does that man deserve this apple?
Since man's first change of venue
Many tints, suns, shades, migrations.
Who can pay? The not too dapple?

—*Thomas Whitbread*

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small and troublesome Naga minority of extremist views and that the greater majority desired Indian citizenship. Over this issue a savage war has been fought almost ever since.

It began in 1951. Pandit Nehru convened in that year a meeting of 100,000 Nagas in Shillong (Assam), which was addressed both by him and by U Nu of Burma. Finding Mr. Nehru's ideas insufferable, all the Nagas walked out in a body and a strong civil disobedience movement began.

Efforts to suppress this by police action soon led to violence and bloodshed and the reinforcement of the police by the Assam Rifles, a lightly armed militia especially recruited and trained for internal security duties. This proved insufficient and subsequently, in 1955, full scale operations by regular Indian Army units including Sikhs and Gurkhas began.

From that period onwards there has been an almost complete news blackout about happenings in the area with the exception of managed news generated by the Indians and occasional Naga communication breakthroughs which have penetrated the wall of misinformation about this all-out war waged on a considerable scale between forces of rather disproportionate strength. The Indian Army began to show a surprising degree of barbarism (although no accusations of this kind have ever been levelled against the Gurkhas). Wholesale murder of the civil population, maltreatment of women and acts of terrorism against villages became the order of the day.

In 1960, the President of the Naga National Council and recognized national leader and spokesman for the Nagas, Mr. A. Z. Phizo, came to London with an appalling and almost unbelievable tale of widespread rapine and genocide, which according to his statements had resulted in the deaths of 70,000 Nagas of both sexes and all ages, the assembly of 100,000 civilian captives in concentration camps, the plundering of about 500 villages (many of which were burned), the

destruction of about 150 churches (the Christian converts among the Nagas are Northern Baptists), wholesale rape (often on church premises), execution by beheading, bombing of villages and destruction of grain and stored food supplies.

Mr. Phizo published in London in 1960 an account listing names of villages destroyed and victims of brutality. His statements were so extravagant in content and so much at variance with the normal pious preoccupation of Indians at the United Nations with such matters as human rights that many found difficulty in believ ing them. The Indian government put a fair amount of effort into countering these serious allegations by denials and by counter-charges. They made an attempt to persuade both their own people and the world that they were opposing a savage and discontented minority within the Naga society and that the true interests of the Nagas were represented by a group put forward by themselves (and collaborationists to a man) which bore the name, "Naga People's Convention." Needless to say, the foreign and Indian press had the fullest access to the N.P.C. in order that they might avail themselves of the Indian side of the

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story. These were the only Nagas they could meet. The others were described as "hostiles," "rebels," or "dacoits" and their numbers were depreciated to an improbable figure of about 1,500.

Actually, the scale of operations of the war was such that about 50,000 Indian troops were generally engaged on that front. A separate command was set up to operate against the "hostiles" called "G.O.C. Nagaland." At one time a full division was thus employed but the arrangement was found to be unwieldy and underwent reorganization into a reinforced brigade group. Opposed to an average of 50,000 troops were 15,000 to 18,000 Naga men. As all have found who have tried to cope with a well trained force as large as that operating on familiar ground, this is a large number. And the Nagas had been quite well armed with weapons largely captured from the Indians or collected from the battlefields of Assam and Burma.

In 1962, a Naga party of four leaders including Maj-Gen. Kaito, their Commander in Charge, and Yongkong, a civilian of ministerial rank, fought their way with a column 135 strong through territory containing about 40,000 enemy troops over a mountain and jungle route about 500 miles in length. The escape path lay through the Lushai and Manipur Hills and their security was never endangered by any of the indigenous peoples who, without exception, were loyal to them. (Some of these, the Mizos, have since started a revolt of their own.) The party then flew to London at the request of Mr. Phizo and some of his British friends who wished to have a full and first-hand account of the situation as it then existed.

There was one particularly good feature about their presence in London at that time. At the end of 1962, China launched an attack on India. Informed students of the area had been very disturbed for some time about the unpleasant consequences which might come out of the Naga revolt in the event of the invasion of India by the Chinese Communist forces.

Bearing in mind the proclivities of resistance movements (particularly when hard-pressed) these observers feared that the Chinese might exploit the situation and entrap the Nagas by providing them with arms. There have been, as a matter of fact, several insinuations by the Indian government (and these persist) that the Nagas have been in touch with the Chinese, or vice-versa, but real evidence to substantiate this has been lacking.

On Nov. 15, 1962, at a time when India was in a state of crisis, Mr. Phizo held a press conference in London at which he read a cable he had despatched to Mr. Nehru which read as follows:

AT THIS CRITICAL TIME FOR BOTH INDIANS AND NAGAS WE PROPOSE A CEASEFIRE AND AMNESTY FOR ALL NAGAS. WE ARE PREPARED TO POSTPONE SETTLEMENT OF OUR FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS UNTIL COMMUNIST INVADERS HAVE BEEN REPELLED.

To this communication no reply was ever received by the Nagas. Since it was judged to be insufficiently explicit by some, Mr. Phizo wisely followed it with a longer one which included the following:

IF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT MY EARLIER CABLED PROPOSAL FOR A CEASEFIRE BETWEEN THE INDIAN ARMY AND THE NAGA HOME GUARD THE NAGAS WILL BE PREPARED TO ORGANIZE A RESISTANCE FORCE AGAINST THE CHINESE. THEY WOULD OPERATE IN A SIMILAR WAY TO VEE FORCE IN THE WAR YEARS AGAINST THE JAPANESE. THE PRESENT NAGA MILITARY FORCE WOULD OPERATE UNDER THE COMMAND OF ITS OWN OFFICERS BUT FOR OVERALL MILITARY STRATEGY THEY WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE INDIAN MILITARY COMMAND.

THE MILITARY ARRANGEMENT WOULD REMAIN IN FORCE FOR ONE YEAR OR LONGER . . . AT THE END

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OF THE YEAR OR SUCH LONGER PERIOD AS MAY BE AGREED A CONFERENCE WILL BE HELD TO SETTLE THE POLITICAL STATUS OF THE NAGA TERRITORY AND THE WISHES OF THE NAGA PEOPLE WOULD THEN BE DECLARED BY FREE ELECTION.

The proposal was not accepted and hostilities continued, but the honorable intentions of the Nagas had been made plain. Fortunately for them, a most redoubtable champion of their cause then entered the lists in the person of the Rev. Michael Scott, a dedicated cleric who obtained permission from Mr. Nehru to go to Nagaland, with the intention of arranging a ceasefire agreement. This he was able to do in the capacity of intermediary after lengthy discussions which ended in an agreement effective on Sept. 6, 1964.

The agreement was signed by Mr. Chaliha of the government of Assam, Jaya Prakash Narayan, a noted Indian politician and Michael Scott. Since that date the truce has been fairly well kept in spite of occasional infractions. Political discussions have been proceeding to clarify the future status of Nagaland. Quite recently these have been going badly and there have been reports of derailments of Indian trains blamed upon the Nagas. The Indians have shown forebearance about these incidents and have been prepared to admit that they may be due to isolated acts of vengeance. The ceasefire did not break down and is now expected to last until the middle of October. There is some question as to whether it can be renewed. The Rev. Scott was asked to leave India last spring. The government charged that he was treating a domestic problem as an international issue. It is much to be hoped that wisdom on both sides will prevail and that a mutually acceptable solution can be found. At one time it appeared quite impossible that any progress could be made to end a bloody conflict of an apparently irreconcilable nature, yet it proved possible to arrange a ceasefire. The document which detailed the terms of the armistice ends with the following moving words which ought to inspire with hope others faced with similar difficulties:

It will be a day of thanksgiving to all who have been driven into this conflict, and pray to God that the period of this deliverance will be used by the leaders of both sides and of all parties to seek an honourable settlement. Only then will the people be able to live in peace and security to pursue the creative tasks of peace. These will include the reunion of families and the restoration of homes and other things that have been damaged in the villages of Nagaland.

We should also hope and pray from our own experiences here that the world may be delivered from the evil consequencs of political and ideological conflicts pursued to the point of violence, death and destruction when it is God's clearly revealed purpose that the creative and generous impulses of humanity prevail over hatred and contempt. To the people of Asia the tragedy of Nagaland will, we hope, serve both as a warning and an encouragement that reason and peaceful negotiations can emerge out of even the darkest despair and misery.

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The Corner Aphorist

By Sam A. Darcy

☞THE ROMANS HAD A saying: "Pecunia non olet" which means money does not stink. The Roman senators must have handled a different kind of money than a certain one of ours.

☞SOMEONE ONCE said: "the tree of liberty will not survive too much grafting".

☞FOR THE SAFETY of pedestrians the poet of Broadway, E. Y. Harburg, sends us this rhyme:

Where Bishop Patrick crossed the street
An "X" now marks the spot
The light of God was with him
But the traffic light was not.

☞CRITICS OF LBJ'S policy in Vietnam are unfair. They say it isn't clear. It seems clear enough to us. On June 18th the President said:

"We are fighting only to give the Vietnamese the right to select a government of their choice."

This month they will hold an election to make their choice. Of course, just to make certain that the choice is a good one, it has been announced that neutralists, Vietcongs, and Communists will not be allowed to vote.

☞LOVELY BARBARA OCHROCH of Penn State University writes to protest against the suppression of student and teacher freedoms in some universities. It's true. The University of California at Berkeley has emerged from behind to win a rating as high as Harvard, Yale and Princeton, in large measure due to the freedom to probe for truth in all areas allowed its students and teachers. The Rightist extremists want to destroy all this. "The university should go back to becoming a storehouse of knowledge, not an open forum," they say.

How a university becomes a storehouse of knowledge was once explained by Charles W. Eliot, a famous Harvard president:

"It is simply that the freshmen bring so much knowledge in and the seniors take so little out."

U.C.'s way is better and we hope they save their great school from the Rightist attack.

☞COUSIN BARNEGAT WAS in. He wants to start a new magazine. "It could make more money than the Saturday Evening Post," he said. "You know about the CIA, FBI, Secret Service, Army, Navy and Air Force intelligence organizations, city and state secret investigatory bodies, telephone tappers, neighborhood snitchers, mail snoopers, etc.? They cost billions of dollars and employ hundreds of thousands of people. But do they have a trade or professional magazine like doctors, lawyers, plumbers, chiropractors, and dentists? No! I'll start one. I even have a name for it: "Popular Stool-pigeon."

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Letter from Lorelei

DEAR SAM,

Anybody home? Are all of you hiding in the cellars, away from the heat and stickiness? I got no place to hide, so I am reduced to a grease spot. I am suffering my yearly purgatory — too hot to write, to cook, to eat, garden growing wild, chicken running half naked, thunder and lightning and winds, horrible climate, horrible place, and I am perpetually hungry and thirsty.

I am happy we are bombing the hell out of the VC but we should have done it right in the beginning. Of course if we had, that war would be over and lots of guys would be running around with no jobs and we would have to hurry and start another 'lil war somewhere to make some people we don't even know happy to get cake mixers and chrome plated shower baths and stuff. And "elections."

Nobody around this joint has energy to do anything except Bimbo, an indefatigable little cat who exhausts all the others, one after the other, tormenting them. He makes me perspire just looking at him racing around, climbing, eating.

I read that Billy Graham was not such an archangel in London. Everybody is tired of his ranting. I think he is a pain in the neck and an opportunist. He is worried about the sex behavior and obsession but so what? He has five kids. He didn't find them under cabbage plants, did he?

I think I should sweep and mop this floor. And I will roast a nice chuck steak tomorrow. Now don't anybody, especially you men-cooks, tell me that it should be broiled. I think charcoal broiling or any other broiling is for cannibals. I want my beef roasted with a bayleaf, a little onion and, if I have it, some nice wine. I don't, though, so I'll do without. On the other hand, I do have a pound of fresh mushrooms which I will convert into a sauce for my roasted chuck, and will eat in solitary splendor.

Right across the road are two strawberry patches and I have the run of them. All I can eat and put in the freezer. So Oliver and I usually go there about six in the morning and get us two or three quarts, some to eat and some to freeze. I'd love to make some jam, but that would mean watching it beside the stove, and in this climate I no like. I also have five peach trees simply loaded with small peaches. I got potatoes almost the size of an egg. I have beautiful crisp lettuce.

You city cave-dwellers don't know what a thrill I get every single morning, stepping out into the wet grass, bare-footed contessa me, and going into my garden to get my quota of vitamins — lettuce, onions — measure the overnight growth of the squash, beans, and cucumbers, and push a finger close to the root of potato plants to feel the new potatoes, to feel which I will soon dig out every day for my dinner.

Now all we don't need is a big storm or hurricane to blow my peaches down. I planted these trees myself as small seedlings, and the peaches are rosy white and delicious.

Yesterday was Oliver W. Holmes' birthday. He was 2 years old and I bought him a can of Chicken o' the Sea Tuna. How is that?

Love,

Lorelei
Federalsburg, Md.

CREDITS

The character sketches are drawn by John Perts, of Suffolk, Va.

Bob and Susie Sanderson, of Bristol, R. I., helped — as usual — with the production of this issue.

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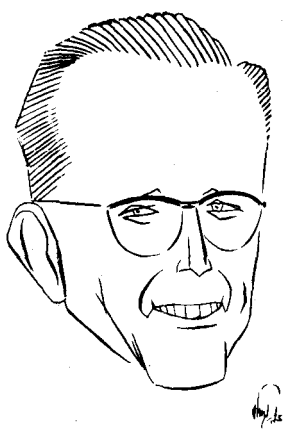
Washington Notes

PICK UP ANY COPY of the *Wall Street Journal* and you'll find a story of a major merger underway. The chief economist of the Federal Trade Commission estimates that by 1975, 200 corporations will hold 75 per cent of all manufacturing assets in the country. There were over 2000 corporate mergers last year.

Senator Philip Hart, chairman of the Senate Antitrust Subcommittee, calls it "the greatest merger tide in our history."



Hart: No Challenge

"Yet," he points out, "antitrust enforcement is being carried on in a low key; major mergers are consummated without apparent challenge; predatory practices often receive little attention, identical pricing patterns in concentrated industries seem to be regarded with little concern."

That's an understatement. The growing concentration of industry in this country has enormous ramifications that so far have been largely ignored. The Johnson Administration, as part of the price paid for big business support, has soft-pedalled antitrust enforcement. It has made no significant effort to meet the challenges posed by the rapidly spreading practice of conglomerate merger, in which corporations spread a vast economic umbrella over a wide variety of related and unrelated industries.

About 70% of last year's mergers were of the conglomerate variety. The Administration took less than 1% to court.

The unhealthy effects of the current merger trend are legion:

—Industry-wide identical pricing has substantially increased, even though such a practice does not differ much from the price fixing that antitrust laws have long prohibited. This identical pricing can stem from a deliberate conspiracy (such as in the drug industry), or develop as a result of price leadership of the dominant firm in a market.

—Conglomerate mergers have permitted companies to use profits from one business line to subsidize attacks on smaller firms in another field.

—The massive economic power of a few firms in commodities such as steel and aluminum has increased the need for frequent federal intervention in price and wage matters.

—Non-competitive industries often treat the consumer with complete disdain, as has been most dramatically indicated in recent revelations concerning automobile safety.

—Mergers in the communications and education fields have reduced markedly the sources of public information. The press, publishing houses, broadcasting stations and educational service companies are being taken over by huge economic power concentrates. RCA owns Random House, Xerox controls Wesleyan University Press, University Microfilms and Heritage Library. Raytheon owns D. C. Heath, Minnesota Mining the Mutual Broadcasting System. The number of independent daily newspapers has declined drastically. Local radio and television stations are owned by national corporations whose primary functions range from electronics to patent medicines.

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The Idler Contest Nr 3

The *Wall Street Journal* recently reported that high government officials experience considerable difficulty when they attempt to resign from the Johnson Administration. The White House desires to keep as many well qualified men in the government as possible. Therefore, resignations tendered are often held without action for weeks and even months. In 250 words or less write a letter of resignation from an undersecretary of a department that the White House would accept immediately. Please type and double space your answer. All answers must be prior to October 7th. Mail your entry to THE IDLER, 413 6th St. NE, Washington, D.C. 20002.

First prize will be a $10. Second and third prizes will be a year of THE IDLER free.

The winner of Idler Contest Nr. 1 is a Washington subscriber who requested that his name be withheld. Readers were asked to write a defense of the Confederate attack on Ft. Sumter in the style of Dean Rusk or a State Department White Paper. Excerpts from the winner's entry:

The issue is so clear that a high school senior can understand it. We have been forced to attack Ft. Sumter to go to the aid of the brave little Ft. Sumterian generals who requested our aid. To back down now would be to supplicate the cravens who backed down at Munich. We learned during the 30's, the last period in which I observed the world, that it was a mistake to feed the lust of aggression.

We had to attack Ft. Sumter to save those brave little people there who believed in our big "freedom-love." We would be glad to remove our bases from that place if only the Northerners would cease doing what they are doing, if only they would leave their neighbors alone, if only they would give up their claim to that land which we have decided is ours.

With each new volley we fire on Ft. Sumter, killing 6% of the garrison, we proclaim "we want peace." We are willing to hop any frigate, send any Vice President, proclaim new spirit of Waikiki to make our peaceful intent known.

I grew up in the red hills of Georgia. My father, who was a postman, often said to me, "Try to get along with colored people, but if you can't, beat the hell out of them."

That's the philosophy that guides this great nation now. Just as our forefathers fought to the last man in our first war which asserted the prerogatives of empire as they defended the Alamo, so we'll fight to the last man to defend that outpost of democracy, that freedom loving land of Ft. Sumter. It doesn't really matter that it was a mistake to attack Sumter; the important point to remember is "We are there."

Others are owned by monopoly newspapers which already have eliminated local printed competition.

—The drive towards merger has not stopped at the national shoreline. American corporations have gained extensive monopolistic power in foreign countries. This power is not only economic; American companies have, for example, helped to block progressive foreign aid and social reform measures in underdeveloped countries. Not a small part of President DeGaulle's annoyance with the U. S. can be traced to the inordinate power of American firms in France. In Canada, Americans control 60 per cent of the petroleum industry, 52 per cent of the mining and smelting industries.

The case of National Tea is a good example of the sort of problems inherent in a permissive attitude towards mergers. The Federal Trade Commission has called a ten-year halt to National Tea's growth by merger. The reason, as outlined by FTC Chairman Paul Rand Dixon, was this:

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"National enjoyed a substantial degree of what the economists call 'market power' in a number of its 500-odd markets. In many cities where it had this market power, respondent exercised it in two quite predictable ways: (1) It had higher markups than it was able to enjoy in the cities where competition was still vigorous enough to limit its pricing power, and (2) it was able to extract discriminatory price concessions and promotional allowances from its suppliers. Then, having amassed these noncompetitive profits in its 'market power' cities, it could use them to subsidize its expansion, or at least its survival in cities where it faced stiff competition. The end result of such tactics might be that it would expand its position in competitive cities until, as the Commission concluded, 'It acquires the same kind of pricing power it now enjoys in those other cities where it is already the dominant seller.' "

The characteristic defense of massive corporations includes claims of more efficiency, more innovation and more advanced technology. But Senator Hart believes these claims are exaggerated. He points out, for example, that the computer is now available to small as well as large companies. Furthermore, "the smaller corporation has the advantages of flexibility, rapid decision making, and other managerial efficiencies which are not available where layers of bureaucracy are built in."

Other counter-arguments come to mind: the number of small electronics firms that have become successful precisely because they *were* more technologically advanced than the older and larger firms; and, again, the automobile industry, in which innovation has been limited primarily to styling and increased horsepower.

"A company," says Hart, "is entitled to be judged on its own merits and efficiencies — not on its market power. This is the way of real progress. To throw away a time-tested concept on the basis of false assumptions [of effeciency, etc.]—as I believe is happening—will result only in a cartelized industrial system with government finally setting prices and wages."

We are well down the road to such a situation. Despite the fact that the Supreme Court has, in recent decisions, strengthened the government's position in antitrust actions, there is little evidence that this Administraion intends to move with vigor commensurate with the problem. If the current federal attitude continues, the consumer will be left with higher prices and less choice, and more and more economic and political power will be vested in the few.

Headless Fish

By Edward P. Morgan

DURING A RECENT hot spell a friend took my wife and me sailing on Chesapeake Bay. A landlubber from dry farming country, I have had a longing for the water as long as I can remember and as a boy partially quenched this thirst by drinking in long draughts of adventure from the sea stories of Charles Kingsley, Richard Harding Davis, Rafael Sabatini and Heaven knows how many others. Somehow I never quite made the transition from fantasy to full-fledged skipper or first mate and I am about as handy aboard a boat as a bricklayer in the cockpit of a Boeing 727. But the excursion swelled with promise like a full spinnaker. It turned out to be a stunning experience but not in the way I had expected at all.

The encroachments of our gas station, motel, neon-sign and naked power-pole civilization have not quite managed to spoil the Revolutionary charms of Annapolis, which is not only the capital of Maryland but the seat of the U.S. Naval Academy and one of the leading pleasure-boat centers of the world as well. A brisk

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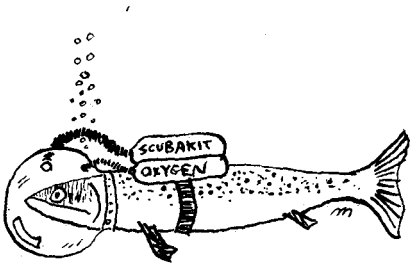
morning breeze greeted us and we swung away from the dock, down the channel and into the bay with high hopes. Two years before the mast, I figured at that point, would be too short a cruise for me. But after the second beer the wind dropped and there was little left to do but soak up the sun, the scenery — and the smells.

At first glance the panorama was a kind of saturated Dufy painting, the sharp white sails cutting soft blue sky over dark water, contained by a vast collar of hazy green shore. At one point I counted well over a hundred craft of all kinds — ketches, yawls, sloops, schooners, cabin cruisers, power boats and one absurd vessel which appeared to be a sea-going piece of kleenex mounted on a match stick. There must have been hundreds of other boats beyond the eye's reach on the great bay — floating testimony to the opulence of the Great Society No longer can the rich claim yachting as their exclusive pleasure. It's a frozen chicken in every galley and an outboard on every trailer these days.

But as we thought to roll over the rail for a midday swim, other matters floated into our consciousness: garbage and dead fish. Tin foil, pop bottles, sandwich wrap and thousands upon thousands of dead fish, many with their heads off. The refuse was no mystery. Wanton sailors, amateur and pro alike, were making a kind of Sargasso Sea out of Chesapeake Bay. Through the shocked imagination ran a snorkeler's glimpse of the bottom of the bay steadily filling with broken glass and picnic lunch scraps, not to mention other matter.

The fish, however, could not be so easily explained. One theory of our crew was that midshipmen's mine-testing might have killed them. The headless carcasses seemed to support this reasoning. But a few fish were still thrashing about, as if they were gasping for life. Later in Washington, a senior researcher of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Raymond Johnson, furnished the answer and it was a shocking one. The fish, members of the herring family, died of lack of oxygen, in other words they suffocated in the poisoned waters of Chesapeake Bay. This has been going on for at least 14 years; the worst year, by Johnson's check, was 1964, though the lack of wind and rain — conditions prevailing the day we went sailing — greatly reduce the circulation of the already insufficent oxygen supply. The Navy was not guilty. Shock waves from such test explosions as it conducts pass harmlessly through a fish's body. A fish's head decays first and quickly, explaining the headless ones.

But the real headless ones, of course, are we, the American public and our communities. The Potomac River is virtually an open sewer all the way from Harper's Ferry — 171 miles upstream — until it empties into the Bay. President Johnson wants people swimming in a clean Potomac by 1975. Scientist Johnson says experts estimate it would cost at least $2 billion to cleanse it and it's not clear how long it would take. As for Chesapeake Bay, he estimates that at the present rate of pollution, it will be "dead" in less than five years; the striped bass, shad and other fish trying to



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CONTEMPORARY RELIGION

From the bulletin of a Washington church:

THE HONORABLE J. EDGAR Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, will be honored with a Faceted Colored Glass Window at the Capitol Hill Methodist Church, 5th & Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., at Seward Square. The Window will be named "THE J. EDGAR HOOVER WINDOW" and will face Pennsylvania Avenue. It will be one of the largest church windows in the city, 22 feet wide, 33 feet high. It will have seven longitudinal sections, each framed with limestone columns, side, top, and bottom. The window, however, will be seen as a whole and not in the seven sections.

The theme of the window will be "Statemanship Through Christion Virtues." The figure of The Christ will dominate and will be seen by the passerby on Pennsylvania Avenue. Also symbols of the Heavenly Father (The Eye) and the Holy Spirit (The Flame) will be visible from a distance.

Upon a closer look you will see symbols of Christian virtues that have influenced the life of Mr. Hoover and other Christian statesmen. They are:

The Anchor, symbolizing Hope; The Balance Scales, symbolizing Justice; The Compass, symbolizing Temperance In All Things; The Cross, symbolizing Faith; The Lamp, symbolizing Wisdom, Education, Learning; The Lily, symbolizing Purity or Cleanness of Heart; The Oak Leaf, symbolizing Courage.

These will be appreciated at a closer distance from within or out of the church.

The Window of the new Capitol Hill Methodist Church sets precisely on the spot of the birthplace of Mr. Hoover. He lived, played, and grew on this land as a boy. His mother lived here until her death. Mr. Hoover, faithful to his mother, visited her consistently at this spot after becoming Director of the F.B.I.

The pastor of Capitol Hill Church, the Reverend Edward B. Lewis, felt there should be something in honor of Mr. J. Edgar Hoover in the new church. He developed the Window, the theme and procured the permission of Mr. Hoover to proceed.

Bishop Wilbur E. Hammaker, retired Bishop of the Methodist Church, and a strong supporter in the Capitol Hill Church, was requested by the pastor to be chairman of the financing of the large Window which naturally would be expensive. He graciously accepted the challenge.

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enter from the Atlantic will be prevented by a "pollution block" from swimming upstream.

For 200 years we have been collecting and leaving unpaid the bills for poisoning every major water system in the United States. A day of reckoning is at hand. Lake Ontario will be dead in five years; Lake Erie is almost dead now. There is a way out but it's not cheap. It took 15 years and a billion dollars to clean up the

From the ABC Radio program "Edward P. Morgan and the News," sponsored by the AFL-CIO.

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Ohio River. Interestingly, only one-fifth of this was federal funds; municipalities and industry produced the rest for sewage treatment, pollution controls, prevention surveillance, et cetera. Life on land, anthropolgists tell us, originally emerged from the sea. Poisoning the waters is hardly the way to show our gratitude. What greedy, thoughtless suckers we humans can be.

Fill your freezer with organically raised Angus beef from registered herd, Maine, twelfth year. Shipped frozen in oven-ready, family size packages. From cattle raised in natural environment free of pesticides, chemical fertilizers and toxic substances. Minimum shipment: one cubic-foot carton. Write BEEF, c/o Idler.

Wanted: Contact with expert in music notation by somewhat gifted original creator on subjects that really matter. M. Bernhardt, 1238 Morris Ave., Bronx, N. Y. 10456.

ART'S GALLERY

by Art Finley

No, YOU were gonna bring the flute . . .

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Flotsam & Jetsam

☞Found in a men's room of a restaurant in Virginia: a blackboard and chalk.

☞NASA has awarded several contracts to study the feasibility of using a huge satellite to reflect the sun's light on the dark side of the earth. The orbiting mirror would be used for "night-time illumination for search and rescue operations, recovery operations, security areas and polar latitudes." We realize Mr. Johnson wants our light to shine in every corner of the globe, but isn't 24 hours a day a bit too much?

☞Edward McCormack, nephew of the House Speaker, who's running for governor in Massachusetts, has been dubbed the Man from Uncle.

☞We wonder whether the President doesn't also feel that Senator Fulbright was responsible for the Negro riots this summer.

☞As we broke the tab off one of those beer cans without opening the damn thing, a friend, who was standing nearby, remarked, "They don't make flip-tops the way they used to."

☞Have you noticed how the President's clothes don't seem to fit quite right without all those polls in the pockets?

☞The latest scientific news from Saudi Arabia is that Shaikh Abdul Aziz Bin Baz, vice president of the Islamic University at Medina, says that the earth is stationary and the sun goes around it and that anyone who thinks otherwise ought to be executed. In a Saudi newspaper article the scholar wrote:

"There is nothing wrong with trying to set people straight, no matter how late it is . . . If the earth were rotating, as has been claimed, then towns, mountains, trees, rivers and seas would have no stability. People would see the towns to the east in the west, and towns to the west in the east."

But we should pause before laughing at the gentleman. After all, his view of the world isn't all that more myopic than that of the White House.

Enter a gift subscription for a friend.

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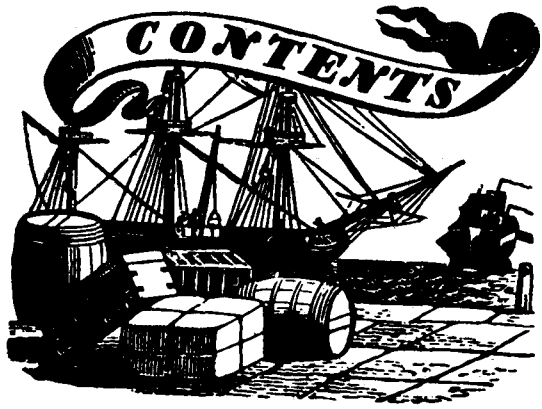

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